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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE

LIVING CONDITIONS IN NEPAL, 1953

Outlying Cities to Kathmandu

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POKHARA

Climate: Pokhara is located in a small valley 100 miles west of Kathmandu. The elevation is about 3000 feet and the temperature does not vary too much from that at Kathmandu. As at Kathmandu snow peaks are visible the year round, but much closer. The monsoon characteristics are about the same as at Kathmandu.

Clothing: Heavy clothes are needed for winter use. Clothes that are suitable for the middle half of the United States is satisfactory. One will need a minimum amount of dress clothes. When one plans to be in the field part time, khaki shirts and pants are ideal. Sport shirts may be substituted for the khaki shirt in summer. Light rain clothes are needed during the monsoon period. Suitable umbrellas can be purchased here. There are a few ready made clothes in Nepal. If one runs short, he can have some made at a reasonable price. Both winter and summer formal dress is needed for both men and women.

Housing: Housing is available and furnished by the U. S. Government. Water is available but there is no electricity. Kerosene refrigerators and Coleman lanterns are used.

Radio: Battery type short wave radio sets are used successfully here. It is advisable to bring one from the States; however, these are available in Kathmandu and Calcutta. Programs in English are broadcasted on the All India Radio for a good part of the day. Some programs can be received from the States. Radio-Ceylon programs are also received in Kathmandu. All local programs are in Nepali. Small record players are welcomed here.

Sports: Pokhara Valley is known as fishermen's Paradise. Hunting is limited. Horse back riding and hiking is available.

Entertainment: One will create his own entertainment. He will need to subscribe to his favourite magazines and newspapers and bring indoor and outdoor games. It is entirely isolated from any other Americans.

Available foods: Food of all kinds are very scarce. There are no canned goods. There are a few vegetables in season. Oranges and bananas are plentiful in season. Potatoes are about the only vegetables available the year round. Fish and mutton is available most of the time and poultry products are limited. Families coming to Nepal should plan to import canned meat, fruit, preserves, flour, meal, sugar, salt, and shortening.

All sorts of pastry mixes, juices, canned milk, and milk substitutes, also mixes for drinks will have to be imported. This is not a complete list so about anything in the way of food that is brought can be used.

Medicine and Hospitals: There is a British Christian Dispensary in Pokhara where Doctors and nurses and a limited amount of facilities and medicine are available. In emergencies the personnel should use hospital facilities at Calcutta or Delhi. It is always wise to bring a good supply of common drugs along.

Automobiles: No automobiles are needed as there are no roads or means of bringing an automobile into Pokhara Valley.

Communication: There is a wireless Service to Kathmandu. There is a Nepali Post Office but American personal mail is brought in and sent out by plane. All freight is brought in by plane. The only available local transportation is coolie service. Horses are used for personnel transportation within the Valley. Plane Service is the only means of traveling outside the valley. One can travel south to Butwal over a 4 day trek to contact bus service if necessary.

Sanitation: There are no governmental health facilities. One can use the U. S. Health Services in Nepal and use special precautionary practices and be safe.

Domestic Help: Help is either available or can be imported from other parts of Nepal.

Churches: One can worship with the British Medical Mission group which holds worship services within their own compound each Sunday.

BIRATNAGAR

Climate: The climate at Biratnagar is similar to that of all posts of India which are located on the plains. The temperature in winter ranges from 45 to 75 degrees. May and June are the hottest months. The temperature ranges from 75 to 105 degrees. The monsoon begins about the middle of June and continues until about the middle of September at which time the temperature is somewhat lower.

Clothing: Clothing suitable for tropical weather is needed. Light weight dress clothes as well as work clothes will be desirable. One can always use khakis for work clothes plus some sport clothes. It is desirable to have a minimum amount of formal dress for both men and women to use especially when going to parties outside of Biratnagar. Very light rain clothes are needed during the monsoon.

Housing: Housing is available and furnishings are also available for U. S. Foreign Service personnel. It is advisable that personnel bring linens, blankets, pillows, silverware and all necessary dishes for serving.

Although not as adequate as in the States the houses have power, water and bathroom equipment.

Radio: Short wave radio battery sets are much appreciated here. It is advisable to bring one from the States; however, these are available in Kathmandu and Calcutta. Programs in English are broadcasted on the All India Radio for a good part of the day. Some programs can be received from the States. Radio-Ceylon programs are also received in Kathmandu. All local programs are in Nepali. Small record players are welcomed here.

Other Electrical Equipment: Fans are required and those who have fans, any size, should bring them. The voltage is somewhat stronger at Biratnagar than at Kathmandu and washing machines and irons can be used; however, local dhobis can be secured at reasonable prices. Transmitters should be brought or bought after arriving. International light plugs should be brought along.

Sports: Sports are very limited at Biratnagar. Where one can join an organized hunt in this area tiger and wild boar hunting can be enjoyed.

Entertainment: There is one cinema hall here and all pictures are of Hindi type. One will need to create his own entertainment. He will want to be well stocked with subscriptions to his favorite magazines and papers. The English type Indian Papers which carries much world news can be secured here. Families should bring many games for indoor and outside use.

Available Foods: Some canned foods are available but high priced. Fresh vegetables are available in season. Lamb, chicken and water buffalo are the only meats available. Since there is no sanitary facilities and refrigeration at the markets it is best to buy alive and have them dressed. Families coming to Nepal should plan to import canned meat, fruit, preserves, flour, meal, sugar, salt, and shortening.

All sorts of pastry mixes, juices, canned milk and milk substitutes, also mixes for drinks will have to be imported. This is not a complete list so about anything in the way of food that is brought can be used.

Oranges, limes and bananas are available in season.

Medicine and Hospital: The more common drugs can be purchased here. There is one Nepal Government Hospital with one doctor in charge. The facilities at the hospital are very limited. In general both medical and hospital facilities and doctors are very limited. Families are advised to bring a goodly supply of useful drugs. In case of necessity hospitals at Calcutta can be used.

Automobiles: It is not advisable to bring an automobile to Biratnagar. The roads around Biratnagar do not warrant the use of a car. American jeeps are available for official business. There is train service out of Biratnagar three times daily and plane service out three times a week.

Communication: Telephone service is available but undependable. Wireless service is available to Kathmandu. The Indian Post Office at Jogbani which is four miles from Biratnagar serves this area. All overseas mail will come through the American Embassy at New Delhi or American Consulate at Calcutta.

Sanitation: The area is considered malarious but precautionary measures can be used effectively. The water for use at the American headquarters comes from a shallow well pump which can be boiled and filtered easily. Indoor toilet facilities are available and the houses can be properly screened.

Domestic Help: Although the expense of domestic help is somewhat higher than at Kathmandu, there is sufficient help available.

JANAKPUR

Except for electricity and plane service the conditions in Janakpur are the same as at Biratnagar. This post is connected with India by bus and railroad. It is a more isolated post than Biratnagar. It is planned to establish a training school in Janakpur.

Bhairawa

Another terai post similar to Biratnagar except it is much more isolated and a small village with very little services of any kind. Bhairawa is nine miles to a railroad but has bus service. This is a development center.

HITAURA

Hitaura is a terai post with its better climate being in the foot hills of the Himalaya. It is a small village with no modern services of any kind, however, it is on a bus road that connects with railroad to India. Hitaura is another development center post.



